



Yearly Medicaid Funding Cuts Cause Harm

Over the past eight years, the Florida Legislature has slashed Medicaid reimbursements to safety net hospitals by more than **\$1.5 billion**.

These deep, ongoing cuts to the 14 safety net hospital systems include more than **\$1.2 billion** in reductions to reimbursements for hospital inpatient care, and more than **\$302 million** in cuts to reimbursements for hospital outpatient care.

Cuts of this magnitude seriously threaten the availability of hospital care for all patients—not just the poor and uninsured—and could force the closure of highly specialized health services that benefit the entire community.

Among the vital health care services and programs that are threatened by ongoing Medicaid cuts are:

- Trauma centers
- Burn units
- Neonatal intensive care units
- Organ transplant programs
- Specialized surgery programs
- Outpatient clinics
- Medical residency programs for Florida's next generation of doctors
- Pediatric specialty programs


While these cumulative Medicaid cuts hurt all hospitals, they disproportionately harm safety net hospitals. That's because these 14 hospital systems—which represent just 10 percent of all hospitals in the state—provide **40 percent** of all the Medicaid hospital days in Florida, and **41 percent** of all the hospital charity care in the state.

Ongoing Medicaid cuts may also force safety net hospitals to hurt local economies by eliminating thousands of jobs, just as Florida is emerging from the Great Recession and job creation is a leading state goal. The cuts also shift the financial burden of caring for Florida's elderly, the disabled, the working poor and disadvantaged children from the state to local communities.

Medicaid cuts could also exacerbate the "hidden tax" or cost-shift from insufficient government reimbursements to the private commercial insurance market.

SAFETY NET HOSPITALS BY THE NUMBERS


\$1.5 BILLION Medicaid cuts to safety net hospitals (2005 to 2012)



\$1.2 BILLION Medicaid cuts to safety net hospital inpatient reimbursements




\$302 MILLION Medicaid cuts to safety net hospital outpatient reimbursements



\$106.3 MILLION Medicaid cuts



39% of Medicaid costs are financed by state funds



Florida's safety net hospitals are only 10% of the state's hospital systems.

Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida

The Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida advocates on behalf of Florida's 14 safety net hospital systems located in the most densely populated areas, yet with clinics and transfer agreements covering Florida's rural communities and coast to coast.

The teaching, public and children's hospitals comprising the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida share a common, yet unique mission. We provide the most highly specialized medical care and train tomorrow's doctors. Yet, unlike some, our doors are open to all of our state's citizens. This combination of advanced medical care and commitment to our communities is what sets us apart.

We offer medical education for tomorrow's physicians and nurses. We serve as trauma centers, offering highly specialized medical expertise and dedicated emergency treatment for Floridians throughout the state. We provide specialized care to women and children, as well as operate costly services like burn units, transplantation and neonatal intensive care, knowing full well that there will never be enough patient volume to cover the expense of offering these lifesaving services to the unfortunate few who need them.

Safety net hospitals ensure that the citizens of Florida receive the care that they need—and deserve.



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OUR STORIES

Specialists Give Olivia Freedom from Ventilator

Watching a Barney DVD in her bed, Olivia Salinas looks like a typical preschooler, except for the tracheostomy tube in her neck. But the three-year-old girl from Tampa made history May 2, 2012, becoming the first child in the world with Pompe disease to have surgery to implant a diaphragm pacing system.

Saleem Islam, M.D., a Shands at the University of Florida College of Medicine pediatric surgeon, performed the procedure, which could help keep Olivia from being dependent on a ventilator. Pompe disease causes progressive muscle weakness, which can lead to respiratory failure in patients.

For her mother, Michelle Ransom, the process has been filled with uncertainty. But the result has been worth it—Olivia is thriving.

"She's in a lot of uncharted territory," she said. "She's doing a lot that has never been done before."

In the pediatric intensive care unit at Shands Hospital for Children at UF just a couple of weeks after her surgery, the little girl was already able to breathe alone without the ventilator for up to four-hour stretches. She



smiled as she maneuvered herself in her tiny black wheelchair, decorated with pink curly ribbons, through the hospital hallways.

"Olivia left the hospital at the end of May and is now off the ventilator all day, only using it when she naps or sleeps at night," Ransom said. "Going without the ventilator has given Olivia the freedom to do the things she loves."

Islam said Olivia's experience is "very significant" for other children with Pompe disease. The fact that she has done so well reinforces this procedure as another option for Pompe patients who are in respiratory failure and unable to breathe without assistance.

"We anticipate doing this on more patients in the future," he said.

We Heal... We Teach... We Care